



## **Representative Dave Upthegrove**

### **Committees:**

Education  
Natural Resources  
State Government

### **Address:**

P.O. Box 40600  
336 John L. O'Brien Bldg.  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

### **Office:**

(360) 786-7868

### **E-mail:**

upthegro\_da@leg.wa.gov

### **Toll-free Legislative Hotline:**

1-800-562-6000

### **TTD for Hearing Impaired:**

1-800-635-9993

# *Representative* **Dave Upthegrove**

## **2002 Legislative Report**

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It is an honor to serve as your State Representative. In my last newsletter, I told you I would support our local concerns over partisan politics. The recently concluded session gave me the opportunity to do just that.

- We took steps to improve our economy by taking a balanced approach – helping both local workers and local businesses.
- We broke the gridlock and moved forward with a transportation improvement plan that will reduce traffic congestion in South King County.
- We made improvements to our local public schools so that every child will have access to a safe learning environment.

Although the state faced a \$1.5 billion budget hole, we were able to make the tough decisions needed to repair the state's operating budget – **without a general tax increase**. We protected our most vulnerable citizens — children and seniors — and maintained core government services.

I am pleased that we completed all of this work and concluded the sixty-day legislative session on time!

I will continue to take a balanced approach to solving our local challenges. Enclosed you will find additional information about the results of this past legislative session – and what the decisions mean for our community. If you have any questions, or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dave Upthegrove  
State Representative  
33<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District

# Rep. Dave Upthegrove 2002 Legislative Report

## OUR COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM LEGISLATIVE SESSION



**33rd  
LEGISLATIVE  
DISTRICT**

### ■ KENT DRUG BABY CLINIC

When funding for Kent's Pediatric Interim Care Center, a facility that treats and cares for drug-affected babies, was threatened by state budget cuts, I worked hard with the clinic to successfully restore full state funding to keep the clinic open.

This wonderful facility in downtown Kent will continue to give drug-affected babies a chance to recover and lead full and healthy lives.



### ■ NO DES MOINES CONVEYOR BELT

This session, I used my position on the Natural Resource Committee to help block legislation that could have facilitated a conveyor belt through Des Moines. A multi-national mining corporation pushed legislation to exempt themselves from environmental laws relating to the aquatic reserve on Maury Island. House Bill 2488 would have allowed the mining corporation to re-open their Maury Island mining operation, from which they likely



would barge millions of tons of arsenic-laden gravel to Des Moines Creek Park. From there, a conveyor belt has been proposed up Des Moines Creek through the City of Des Moines. I remain strongly opposed to the conveyor belt – an irresponsible plan that would be destructive to our environment and quality of life.

### ■ KENT STATION

Kent Station, the mixed-use development project that will serve as Kent's new downtown center, is slated to receive \$900,000 in state funding. The new center will include housing, shops, and a public plaza with a fountain. In addition, Green River Community College may offer educational services at this location. I am proud to have helped secure funding for this project that will bring renewed economic vitality and jobs to the City of Kent.



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## ■ HIGHLINE SCHOOLS NOISE ABATEMENT

The Highline School District is now slated to receive \$5 million (as the first of a \$50 million, ten year plan) from the state for aircraft noise mitigation. The Port of Seattle, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the school district will also be contributing equal matching funds. I joined other local legislators in fighting for this funding because our children deserve the same high-quality learning environment that children in other parts of the state enjoy.



## ■ HIGHLINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Another \$3.189 million has been designated for capital improvements at Highline Community College. The utility tunnels, Redondo pier and roof facilities will all be repaired. These projects are all essential for safe operation of the college, and I am extremely pleased we could obtain funding for them.

## ■ LOCAL TRAFFIC CONGESTION RELIEF

The transportation plan passed by the Legislature includes:

- \$500 million to connect State Route 509 to I-5; and
- \$5 million for the South 272<sup>nd</sup> Street interchange with I-5 in Kent. If improved, this interchange will increase the flow of Kent's East-West traffic.

The above project list has been approved by the Legislature. In November, voters will have the opportunity to vote on a gas tax. Money raised by the gas tax would be used to fund the above projects, as well as other projects that would improve safety and reduce congestion around the state.



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## ■ JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

While our nation has begun to heal from the shocking events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, our state's economy is still feeling its effects. South King County was especially hard hit by the fallout from the September tragedy – it sent a ripple effect through the airline and service industries in SeaTac, and increased the tremendous Boeing layoffs in the Kent Valley.

This Legislative Session, I supported a balanced approach to help local working families during these difficult economic times. To help laid-off workers and their families the Legislature:

- Added \$4 million to the state budget for worker retraining programs- such as those that can be offered at Highline and Green River Community Colleges.
- Expanded unemployment benefits for laid-off workers - this will improve the safety net for folks such as those who lost their jobs in the manufacturing industry in Kent or the service industry in SeaTac.

While I was determined to help families who are feeling the local pinch of the national recession, I also worked to ensure that businesses receive support as the economy struggles to improve. To aid businesses and support jobs and economic development the Legislature:

- Passed unemployment insurance reform legislation that will help many local businesses by reducing the amount they are required to pay into the unemployment insurance system. Due to this legislation, the manufacturing industry, which is the economic engine of the Kent Valley, will save more than \$40 million dollars over the next three years. The service industry in SeaTac will save even more.
- Created a stable source of funding for the Community Economic Revitalization Board, which gives grants and loans to local governments to help with economic developments needs. We also passed legislation directing local governments to include economic development as part of their required planning under the growth management act.

These measures are designed to create jobs and provide opportunities that will get people back to work. Next session, I will continue to take a pragmatic approach to support working families and improve the economic climate for local business.



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